# U.S. COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS 17 MAY 1910

NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM
401 F STREET, N.W., SUITE 312
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10 February 2005

Dear Mr. Rombach:

During its meeting of 25 January 2005, the Commission reviewed the final design for courtyard enclosure for the Smithsonian Portrait Gallery and American Art Museum in the Old Patent Office Building at 7th and F streets. The Commission continues to be encouraged by this exciting design and appreciates the development that responds to previous issues. However, additional research is necessary regarding the color and reflectivity of the glazing selected for the roof enclosure. The ideal glass would be as clear as possible yet have the necessary properties to control solar heat gain and light levels.

The members also recommend the design team further study the free standing "service" wall at the west side of the courtyard. This wall should contain not only the utilities and support equipment for event catering but should also house the video and sound equipment and a large projection screen for electronic presentations. The members also recommended that this wall be shorter in length than the central projecting bay of the courtyard's west wall.

The Commission is encouraged by this exciting design and looks forward to reviewing further developments as the project progresses. In addition, the Commission has requested a site inspection of the building before the next submission. Please coordinate with the staff to schedule an inspection trip.

Sincerely,

Frederick J. Lindstrom
Acting Secretary

Mr. Harry Rombach
Associate Director for Facilities Master Planning
Smithsonian Institution
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cc: Marc Pachter, Director, Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery
Deborah Nauta-Rodriguez, Smithsonian Project Executive
John Drew, Norman Foster and Partners